

REMARKS

A more descriptive title has been provided.

The objection to reference numeral "650" in the drawings was dealt with in the marked-in-red drawing changes submitted with the Second Preliminary Amendment dated July 16, 2002.

The word "thereat" is not misspelled and is defined as "at that place". The British spellings of the terms "optimize" and "utilized" were corrected at page 20, line 30.

The new set of claims 43-68 is submitted herewith, together with a check of \$90.00 for five (5) excess claims. The applicants previously paid for 21 total claims.

By way of brief review, and with the aid of the reference numerals of Fig. 2, this invention is directed to an optical communication system having a first path (20 or 30) for guiding first optical radiation partitioned into a plurality of wavebands (for example, in channels 1-32), a second path (30 or 20) for guiding second optical radiation partitioned into the same plurality of wavebands, and an interface for selectively communicating at least one component of the first radiation corresponding to at least one selected waveband from the first path to the second path.

The interface includes a waveband selective diverting means (e.g., 600, 250) in the first path (e.g., 20), for selecting and diverting said at least one component of the first radiation corresponding to said at least one selected waveband (e.g., λ_1) from the first path (e.g., 20) to an entry point (e.g., at 670) in the second path (e.g., 30) for guidance therealong away from the entry point along the second path. The interface further includes a waveband selective attenuating means (e.g., 360) upstream of the entry point (e.g., at 670) in the second path, for selecting and blocking

said at least one component corresponding to said at least one selected waveband (e.g., λ_1) from the second radiation.

For the Examiner's benefit, it is assumed for exemplary purposes that it is desired to divert a waveband λ_1 (traveling from left to right on the fiber 200 of the first path 20 of Fig. 2) from the first path 20 to the fiber 230 of the second path 30. The waveband λ_1 is selected by the CCU 250 which reflects the radiation back to the coupler 600. The selected waveband λ_1 is output from both ports 1 and 2 of the coupler 600, each at half power. Following the output from port 2, the radiation is amplified at amplifier 470 (to restore its power) and is diverted through CCU 300 and enters port 1 of a coupler 670 from which the radiation of waveband λ_1 is guided toward the left on the fiber 230 of the path 30 of Fig. 2. The CCU 360 is located upstream of the coupler 670 and acts as the attenuating means and blocks the waveband λ_1 of the second radiation that is traveling from right to left along fiber 230 in Fig. 2 toward the coupler 670.

Put another way, the CCU 360 blocks the waveband λ_1 from the second radiation which would otherwise interfere with the same waveband λ_1 from the first radiation that was diverted to the second path. The prior art does not disclose or suggest the invention as now claimed.

Thus, U.S. Patent No. 6,590,681 to Egnell discloses a first optical fiber 7le, 7re and a second optical fiber 7lw, 7rw, but there is no diversion of a selected waveband from a first radiation between these fibers, nor any attenuating means for blocking the selected waveband from a second radiation.

Likewise, U.S. Patent No. 5,903,371 to Arecco discloses a first path 8, 31, 45, 46, 41, 43, 5 and a second path 9, 32, 47, 48, 42, 44, 12. However, there is no diversion of a selected

waveband from a first radiation between these paths, nor any attenuating means for blocking the selected waveband from a second radiation.

The remaining references, U.S. Patent No. 6,519,060 to Liu and U.S. Patent No. 5,353,146 to Webb, likewise do not disclose or suggest these claimed features.

Allowance of all claims is respectfully requested.

Petition is hereby made for a three-month extension of the period to respond to the outstanding Official Action to April 27, 2004. A check in the amount of \$950.00, as the Petition fee, is enclosed herewith. If there are any additional charges, or any overpayment, in connection with the filing of the amendment, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any such deficiency, or credit any such overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 11-1145.

Wherefore, a favorable action is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner would like to discuss this case, then he is invited to telephone the undersigned at the phone number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

KIRSCHSTEIN, OTTINGER, ISRAEL & SCHIFFMILLER, P.C.

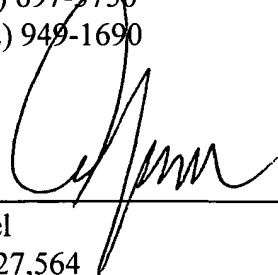
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